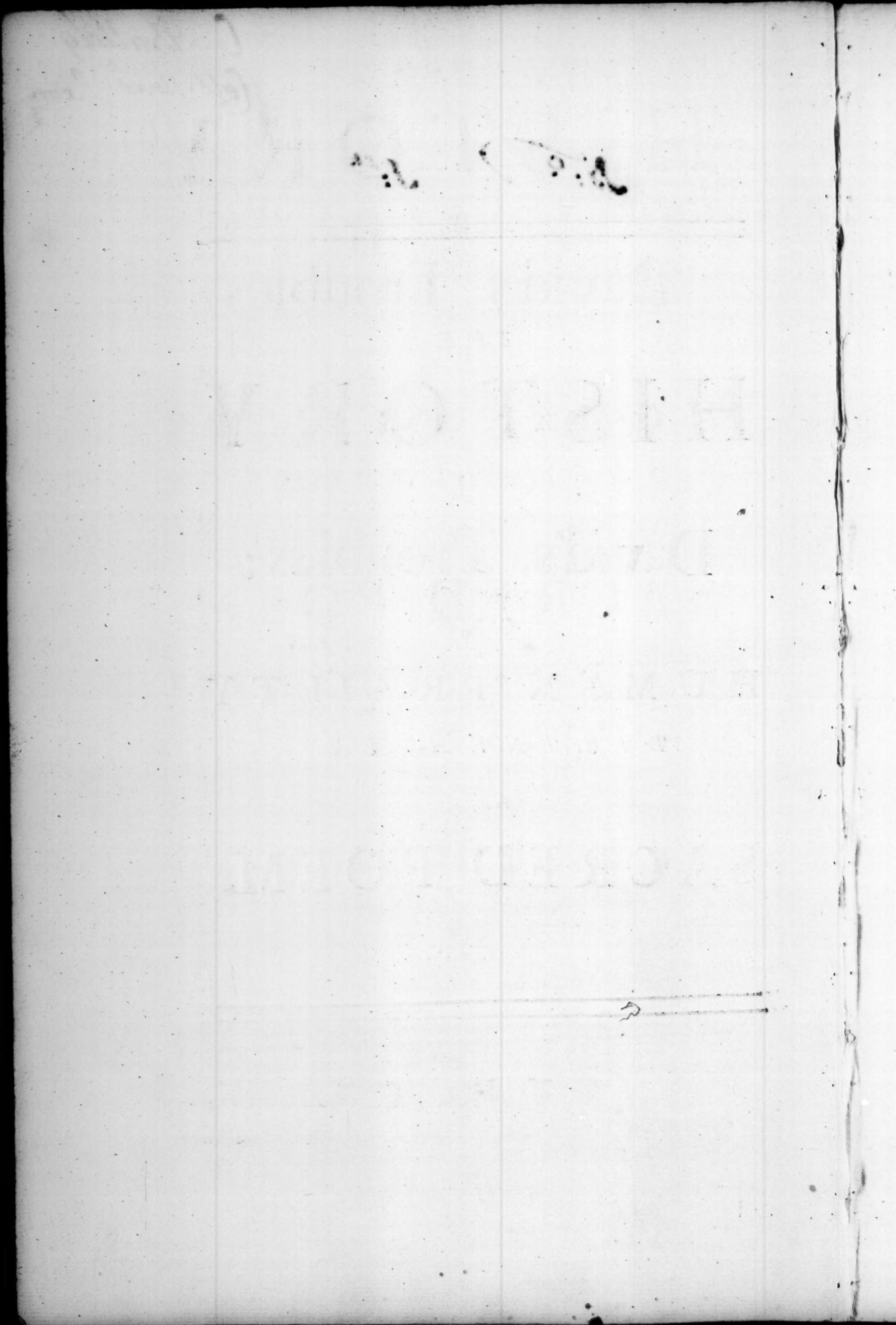


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THE
HISTORY
O F
David's Troubles:
OR,
HUMAN FRAILTY
DELINEATED.
A
SACRED POEM.



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*HONOUR and Shame from no Condition rise;
Act well your Part, there all the Honour lies.
Fortune in Men has some small Diff'rence made,
One flaunts in Rags, one flutters in Brocade.
The Cobler apron'd, and the Parson gown'd,
The Friar hooded, and the Monarch crown'd.
" What differ more (you cry) than Crown and Cowl?"
I'll tell you, Friend : A Wise Man and a Fool.
You'll find, if once the Monarch acts the Monk,
Or, Cobler-like, the Parson will be drunk,
Worth makes the Man, and want of it the Fellow ;
The rest is all but Leather or Prunella.*

POPE's Fourth Epistle.

— *Delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi. Hor.*

O X F O R D ;

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E R R A T A:

PAGE 1. for *Pleasure how great*, read, *How fleeting's Joy*.
Page 8. for *lost a Scepter*, read, *gain'd a Scepter*.



THE.
HISTORY
O F
David's Troubles :
A P O E M.



SING the Causes of a Troubled Reign,
Pleasure how great, how permanent is Pain ;
Reason unthron'd, rebellious Passion's Sway,
The fatal Produce of a Lustful Day :

The ANOINTED HEAD how vicious Joys expose,
A Soul in Anguish, and a King in Woes.

LIGHT Spots on *Ermin* are conspicuous shewn,
And doubly glare the Follies of a Throne.
How then Thy Crimes, O DAVID ! shall we scan ?
Thou greatest Monarch ! Thou most God-like Man !

B

Or

Or how the Frailty of our Frame confess,
When G O D's distinguish'd Fav'rites thus transgress?

THE *Sun* adown the Steep of Heav'n had roll'd,
And fring'd the purple Clouds with Skirts of Gold,
When shunning Grandeur, and the Noife of State,
On the High Turrets of the Royal Seat,
DAVID the Sweets of deep Rebellion sought,
Indulging all the Luxury of Thought.

ON *Sion's* Mount the Cedar-Fabrick stood,
The ruin'd Honours of the *Tyrian* Wood.
Hence stretch'd his Eye around his large Domain,
And much he joy'd him in his ample Reign;
Pleas'd cou'd the Present with the Past compare,
The Regal Glories with the Rural Care:
The Rural Care fair *Bethlem's* Hill renew'd,
Which gently rising in the South he view'd.
Life's Steps from that distinguish'd Day could trace,
When, tho' the youngest of the Sons of *Jesse*,
He first was destin'd by the Sacred Oil
To splendid Cares, and Eminence of Toil.

How did He once the *Bear* and *Lion* slay,
While yet a Swain, to save the fleecy Prey!
At *Elab* how a Beardless Stripling dare
The grim gigantick Terror of the War!

Harsh

Harsh whiz'd the *Sling*, and with a thund'ring Sound
He fell enormous o'er a Length of Ground.

AND now resolv'd He, as new Scenes he chose,
How still new Labours, and new Dangers rose.
To Envy doom'd a Sacrifice to fall,
How twice he 'scap'd the vengeful Hand of *Saul* ;
And how he foil'd the proud *Goliath's* Arms,
To merit *Merab's* falsely promis'd Charms.

HE next the Wonders of his *Sword* admir'd,
When gayly bold, by *Michal's* Beauty fir'd,
Two Hundred Foreskins of the Foe he paid ;
A double Dow'ry for the Royal Maid !
The Royal Maid the daring Youth approv'd,
Met her new Lord, and unreferv'd She lov'd.

NOR yet was the relentless Father won
By the True Subject, or the Duteous Son.
The thirsted Blood still sought he to attain
By Fraud, by Force ; but Fraud and Force were vain.
The faithful *Michal* bid her Spouse depart,
Mourn'd him as Sick with all the Woman's Art,
But thro' a Window secretly convey'd,
To seek at *Ramah* Holy *Samuel's* Aid. —

THENCE fled He, the Devoted Life to save,
Now to *Adullam*, now *Engeddi's* Cave,

To

To Paran's Desart, or the Ziphites Wood :
To Woods, to Caves, to Desarts, SAUL purſu'd.

TRUSTING a Foe before a Father's Wrath,
He sought Protection in the Land of *Gath*.
Thro' *Nob* He thither paſt, a fatal Guest,
GOLIAH's Sword and hallow'd Bread the Priest
Bounteous ſupply'd ; but for the well-meant Aid
The Lives of fourscore Priests to *Saul* were paid.

AT *Gath* Kind *Akith* gave him *Zicklag*'s Town,
And well the Hero merited the Boon,
Till *SAUL* at *Gilboa* fell, and by his Side
The Prince, the other Half of *DAVID*, dy'd.
Much He the Father mourn'd, but more the Son,
gain'd He lost a Scepter, but the Friend was gone.

AND now what Wars he wag'd, what Labours bore,
E'er *Israel*'s Crown at Ease the Monarch wore,
Employ'd his Thoughts ; while *Iabbosbeth* in vain
Labour'd a Lineal Title to maintain.
Murder'd he fell, who ill aspir'd to rule,
A Traitor's Victim, and a Party's Tool !
The hated Crime the Murd'lers Lives atone,
And *David* mounts the uncontested Throne.

AMAZING Toils ! but now the Toils were o'er,
And banish'd Sorrow ſhou'd return no more.

United

United *Israel* glory'd in his Reign,
 And Heav'n his Throne had promis'd to sustain;
 Had destin'd to a long Successive Race,
 Distinguish'd Glory, and peculiar Grace.
 SION he sees, by his Victorious Hand,
 The Seat of Worship, and of Empire stand.
 The *Philistines* and *Amleck* dread his Sword,
 And vanquish'd *EDOM* owns him as her Lord.
MOAB's proud Sons a forc'd Submission bring,
 And *SYRIA* mourns in Blood the Rashness of her King.
 Before his Arms the Strength of *Ammon* falls,
 And haughty *Hanan* trembles in his Walls,
 Repents the Insult that his Pride return'd,
 The Friend provok'd, and proffer'd Kindness scorn'd.

FEAR'D by his Foes, by his Allies caress'd,
 Lov'd by his GOD, and by his People bless'd;
 Remain'd there ought to fear? Or had there been
 A Happier Prince among the Sons of Men?

UNHAPPILY secure! Untimely vain!
 Sincerer Ills, and heavier Griefs remain.
 That Hour, that Ease Thou boasts, shall hurt Thee more
 Than all the Injuries in Fortune's Pow'r.

A *Frontier* Town which crowded Forces shield,
 Dares thus the gleamy Squadrons of the Field;

Secure in Arms on the High Walls they shine,
 While the Foes labour in the secret Mine,
 Till pass'd the gloomy Vaults they rise to Air,
 Horribly dreadful in the proudest Square.

NE'ER felt his Soul the sad Effects of Sin,
 For all was pure, and all was calm within.
 Tumultuous Passion, Lust, Deceit, Despair,
 And black Remorse had never harbour'd there.
 Nought fear'd He from Himself, nor understood
David was yet by *David* unsubdu'd.
 Now was the Hour ill-fated he must know
 That vicious Pleasures terminate in Woe.

URIAH's Garden near the Palace laid,
 Where twining Trees a private Arbor made:
 Yet from aloft the piercing Eye might trace
 With Ease the Secrets of the dark Recess.
 Hither a *Rivulet* was taught to glide,
 Whose constant Store a Marble Bath supply'd:
 And here to bathe, about the Setting-Sun,
 The Lovely *Bathsheba* retir'd alone.
 Unconscious of a Witness She display'd
 Luxuriant Beauty in the fraudful Shade,
 Survey'd each Charm that cou'd *Uriah* move,
 And wander'd o'er the Mystery of Love.
 Her comely Limbs the curling Stream embrac'd,
 And flow'd, but Limpid flow'd, around her Waste.

To the King's View her Snowy Charms were bare,
 He saw Her naked, and he own'd her *Fair*.
 Fair! — She was wond'rous Fair! —
 A Lot too great for any Subject's Bliss!
 Oh, She was HEAV'N, — and oh, that She were His!

Now through his Soul an Earnest Wish there fled
 Of furtive Joys, and an Adult'rous Bed;
 The Hands-breadth Cloud from whence the blackning Storm
 Arose to wreck his Peace, and all his Joys deform.

NOR Rest, nor Ease, th' intruding Thought affords;
 Till He reveals the Secret to his LORDS.
 The Lords officious, with a Courtly Care,
 Discharge the Message, and address the Fair.
 In moving Terms the King's Desires convey'd,
 With too much Ease were those Desires obey'd.
 Soft Love invites, and proud Ambition warms,
 Weak Woman yields, and meets the Monarch's Arms.

WHILE These in Love the flying Hours employ,
 Revel secure, and give a Loofe to Joy:
 Laugh at the Ign'rance of the injur'd Spouse,
 The violated Bed, and cancell'd Vows,
 At *Rabbah's* Siege *Uriah* fought Applause,
 Lavishly valiant in his Country's Cause;
 Till the sad Wanton's News the King alarms,
 That She was pregnant by the Royal Arms.

Now

Now must He be to the false Bed beguil'd,
 Th' imagin'd Father of the spurious Child.
 For this dispatch'd a feign'd Express to bring
 He leaves the Camp, attends the Lustful King.
 Who wanted not (Credulity to force)
 Artful Reception, and prepar'd Discourse.
 Enquir'd the *Monarch*, with design'd Address,
 The *Generals* Welfare, and the War's Success.
 Curious He seem'd each Circumstance to know,
 The Site, the Strength, the Number of the Foe.
 Receiv'd the Answers with majestick Pride,
 Forc'd a Kind Look, and with a Smile reply'd.
 WELL hast Thou satisfy'd our Royal Care,
 Sure of our Favour to Thy House repair.
 Indulge the Pleasures of the *Court* awhile,
 A short Delay shall give Thee back to Toil.
 Let the rough Labours of the *Warrior* cease,
 And taste till then *soft* Love, and *joyous* Ease.

THESE I adjourn to *Peace*, the CHIEF reply'd,
 Ill suit such Pleasures with a Martial Mind.
 The Feast luxurious, and the flowing Bowl,
 Unstring the Sinews, and debase the Soul.
 SAY, shall Thy Soldier the fond Wife possess,
 And melt inglorious in the soft Caress?
 Or press the downy Bed in Silk inclos'd,
 While JUDAH sees Her *Ark* in Tents expos'd?

And

And sheath'd in Arms the Youths of *Israel* dare
 The gen'rous Hardships of the toilsome War?
 May HEAV'N so bless Thee as I disapprove
 This *dull* Inaction, and *unmanly* Love!

To Him the King —— Enough is giv'n to *Fame*,
 At least a Night Domestick Sweets may claim.
 Till Morrow's Dawn Thy purpos'd Hast delay,
 And take Thy Journey with returning Day.

He said, —— resolv'd the Mirthful *Feast* to prove,
 If ought might fire Him to the Joys of Love.
 At his own Table caus'd the CHIEF to dine,
 And the rich Goblet flow'd with gen'rous Wine.
 In vain the *Feast* was serv'd, the Goblet flow'd,
 And all his Arts the wily King bestow'd.
 Stretch'd on the lonely Couch the Night he sped,
 Nor sought the Pleasures of the Nuptial Bed,
 He slept ; —— but Sleep the *Royal* Eye-lids fled.
Uriah's Death the treach'rous King design'd,
 And the black Thought deep labour'd in his Mind.
 He rose, the rash Resolve to *JOAB* wrote,
 Beneath whose Care His *Hosts* at *Rabbah* fought,
 To place Him where the surest Danger lay,
 In the sharp Conflict of the Doubtful Day.
 Strict He enjoin'd, till by the Foes beset,
 Then to retire, and leave Him to his Fate.

The Royal *Signet* clos'd the dire Command,
 And fate consign'd it to *Uriah's* Hand.
 All heedless of the Murd'rous Charge he held,
 Early the Hero hasted to the Field.
 Took his last Orders with a joyous Mind,
 And rush'd impatient to the Post assign'd.
 He charg'd impetuous, till he saw, too late,
 The Foes surrounding, and the Friends retreat.
 Yet dear resolv'd th' abandon'd Life to sell,
 Greatly he fought, as Loyally he fell ;
 And blest'd, with the expiring Gasp of Life,
 Th' *ungrateful* Sovereign, and the *faithless* Wife.

THE Monarch heard the News with Artful Care,
 He blam'd the Sword unknowing how to spare,
 And undiscerning Chance of wasteful War.
 But now avow'd his Flame (the Husband dead)
 And took the Widow to the Royal Bed.
 A Son She bore, and for a transient Time,
 Only he joy'd at the successful Crime.

ABSURD Mankind ! when in the Ways of Ill,
 We for our Reason substitute our Will,
 Fondly secure, and indolently gay,
 In the smooth Calm of flatt'ring Vice we play,
 Till o'er our Heads the Thunder bursting loud
 Echoes tremendous, and proclaims the G O D.

THUS

THUS *David* found his Sanguine Hopes recede,
 And all the gaudy Dream of Pleasure fled ;
 When *NATHAN* came, a venerable Sage,
 In the grave Majesty of Hoary Age.
 Awful his Gesture, and his Words sincere,
 Nor knew He ought to flatter, or to fear.
 He bore his GOD's Commission in his Look,
 Hail'd the vain King,— and thus the *Prophet* spoke.

PLAINTIVE I come of Arbitrary Ill,
 The sad Encroachment of the Lawless Will.
 May *Israel*'s King attend what I relate,
 And say, what Vengeance meets a Crime so great ?

WITHIN Thy Realm a Man there dwelt of late,
 Blefs'd with the Plenty of a vast Estate.
 So large his Herds, that the increasing Breed
 Black'ned the Vales, and low'd in ev'ry Mead ;
 And Flocks so num'rous were around him spread,
 That scarce He knew the Hills on which they fed.
 In the near Cottage liv'd a *Lab'ring Hind*,
 Of scanty Fortune, but an Easy Mind.
 Nor Sorrow He, nor Envy knew, tho' poor :
 A Lamb was all his Joy, and all his Store.
 This Darling Partner of his Board and Bed,
 With Care he nurs'd, with fond Indulgence fed.
 Bred with his Children, as a Child it far'd,
 Lov'd with a Parent's tenderest Regard.

Mean while it chanc'd that to the Neighbouring Dome,
 An unexpected Visitant was come :
 The Lordly Master, for his Friend's Repast,
 Nor from the Flock, nor Herd, selects the Feast.
 His own he spar'd : the Little Fav'rite Ewe,
 The Bosom-Comfort of the *Lab'rer* flew,
 Feasting remorseless on a *Neighbour's* Woe.

SCARCE to the finish'd Tale the King suppress'd
 The rising Fury of the Royal Breast ;
 Incontinent He gave th' incens'd Reply :—
 As the **LORD** lives the Man shall surely die !
 The four-fold Value of the Lamb return'd,
 For Force injurious, and for Pity scorn'd.

THE *Seer*, stern Anger frowning on his Brow,
 Reply'd ;— The Man, whom Thou condemn'st, art **THOU**.
 Ev'n *David* thus hath sinn'd :— and now prepare,
 The Sentence of an Angry **G O D** to hear.

By me He cites Thy Folly, and Thy Pride,
 His Goodness slighted, and his Pow'r defy'd.
 Ev'n Thee, O King ! who durst that Pow'r disdain,
 Rais'd by my Favour from an abject Swain.
 I gave Thee Grace, I gave Thee Strength in War,
 And made Thy Safety my peculiar Care.
 Lavishly bountiful I gave Thee All,
 The Wealth, the Wives, the Diadem of **SAUL**.

Peace thro' Thy Land, and smiling Plenty flow'd ;
 Foes spake Thee *Great*, while Subjects spoke Thee *Good*.
 These Blessings, why cou'd *Judah's* King destroy,
 For the short Transports of a guilty Joy ?
 Bethink, O King ! for what hast Thou resign'd,
 Thy Peace, thy sweet Serenity of Mind ;
 And Raptures which the Virtuous Soul bestow'd,
 Conscious of Worth, and conversant with G O D ?
 For the wild Cravings of the vicious Will,
 And false Appearance of a specious Ill,
 Purſu'd with Labour, purchas'd with Deceit,
 Enjoy'd with Shame, and finish'd with Regret.
 Nor end the Evils of the Crime therein,
 Lust's but the Threshold to the Gates of Sin.
 This well Thou know'st ; for Thou hast found it led
 To the Invasion of the Nuptial Bed,
 The base Deception of the fraudulent Word,
 And the Friend murder'd by the Hostile Sword.
 For *This*, th' infatiate Sword with Endless Rage
 Shall haunt Thine House, and persecute Thine Age.
 For *This*, Thy Wives estrang'd from *David's* Arms,
 Shall to Thy Neighbour's Bed transfer their Charms ;
 Nor furtive shall, like Thine, their Joys be hid,
 The Noon-tide SUN shall view the flagrant Deed.
 ISRAEL th' Justice of her G O D shall know,
 Who makes th' offending Crime th' Offender's Woe.

WHAT wild Amazement seiz'd the *Monarch's Breast*,
 When Vice appear'd in all her Shame confess'd,
 When now no more the glossy Varnish shone ;
 The wretched *Mariner* conceives alone
 Who far has sail'd, and at his wish'd Return
 Has, thro' the Errors of a *misty* Morn,
 With eager Joy imagin'd Land pursu'd :
 But when the Splendor of the *Sun* renew'd,
 Has madly mourn'd the dear Delusion lost,
 And the *Ship* bulging on the Rocky Coast.

HE wept his Folly, and his Crime he own'd.
 Thy Death remitted, and Thy Crime aton'd,
 Thy GOD declares, the *Prophet* said ; the LORD
 Slow to avenge, as righteous to reward.
 Yet since by *This* Thou didst his Name expose
 To the rude Licence of opprobrious Foes ;
 Since Pleas for Vice the *Libertine* may bring,
 From this Excess of *Judah's* Fav'rite King ;
 Die shall the *Child* of the *Adul'trous* Womb,
 Fix'd is his Fate, and unrevers'd the Doom.

THUS spake the *Seer* ; nor farther wou'd disclose
 The destin'd Series of the *Monarch's Woes*.
 Tho' his Prophetick Soul in Time's dark Law
 The Scene of Future Miseries foresaw.
 The Royal Offspring what black Crimes shou'd stain,
 A *Sister* ravish'd, and a *Brother* slain.

Rash *Amnon*'s Death by *Absalom* decreed,
 For beauteous *Tamar*'s violated Bed,
 And *DAVID* grieving at the impious Deed. }
 How He the Slain and Fugitive shou'd mourn,
 Until the faithless *Absalom* return:
 Return! accrû'd Ingratitude to show,
 And plunge him farther in the Depth of Woe:
 How forc'd o'er *Jordan*'s Stream the Sire shou'd shun
 The impious Arms of the Rebellious Son;
 Yet in the Anguish of a Father sad,
 With Ashes sprinkled, and with Sackcloth clad,
 Shou'd grieve the Conquest that his Death must cost,
 And all the *Rebel* in the *Son* be lost.

FARTHER, He saw him destin'd to sustain
 A deeper Anguish, and a keener Pain;
 When summon'd by the unrelenting Seer
 To the sad Choice of Famine, Plague, or War.
 How each dire Shaft from the Almighty's Bow
 Shou'd pierce his Soul with the severest Woe,
 While gasping he surveys, on ev'ry Side,
 The guiltless Thousands for the *Monarch*'s Pride.

OPPREST with Grief, He saw, his Hoary Age
 By *Adonijah*'s Plot, and factious Rage.
 And ev'n in Death transmitted with his Crown
 Invidious Vengeance on his *Fav'rite* Son.

THESE

THESE He foresaw, yet wisely these suppress'd
 Safe in the close Recesses of his Breast.
 For HEAV'N in Pity to our State conceals
 From Human View the Course of Future Ills.
 Reluctant else wou'd wretched Man essay
 The Toilsome Journey of the Thorny Way.
 Inly the Fortunes of the King he mourn'd,
 Restrain'd the rising Grief, and Home return'd.
 While *David* in th' expiring Child beheld
 The sad Prediction of the *Seer* fulfill'd.
 Apart in Bitterness of Soul He fate,
 And his *Repentance*, as his *Crime*, was great.
 Let us, by his EXAMPLE warn'd, beware
 Of tempting Vice, and shun the fatal Snare.
 Or, by the Frailty of our Passions led,
 Atone with Sorrow for the loath'd Misdeed.
 On each Offence a sad Remembrance cast,
 And mend the FUTURE, as we mourn the PAST.

F I N I S.

